Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat Incorporated.

AUGUST 1990

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting August 3 Dr.I.Mansergh - Possums and Gliders.

Meeting September 7 Mr.R.Winter - Private Lives of Mammals.

Excursion August 5 - Ben Major Area

Excursion August 31- W V F N C A, Wyperfeld Nat. Park
September 9- Enfield Forest Park

BRUSHTAIL POSSUM

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Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth., Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m. EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY.

Making A Native Garden Mr Bob. Whitehead.

In 1982 the Parks and Gardens were asked to make a plan for the clay pit that is now Lake Esmond, which is filled with ground water and it was used for swimming.

The area was refenced and even in summer the water was coming into the postholes, there is a current in the Lake.

The area is very restricted, it has a total area of 9.3 Hectares.

The programme was to be a community one using the C.E.F. Schemes, there is a toilet and a viewing area. Some areas are for specimen plants others are for plants indiginous to Ballarat district.

The area was originally covered in furze, blackberries, tree lucerne, rubbish and some pines. one block was purchased.

It was designed for Native Plants as many as possible and as a multifunctional as possible and an anticipated 8 to 10 thousand plants, there were 400 trout put into the Lake.

Radio controlled model yachts are sailed there, Native Birds are plentiful, walking track and accessability to wheelchairs in most areas, there are also displayed certain plants of interest.

As water is plentiful a boggy area was developed as a creek flowing into a wet patch and underground to a pond with a waterfall, which has a submersable pump, the area was planted with many Eucalypts and Ferns, although there has been problems with shallow rooted trees.

A contractor was employed to Bstter the edge, one area was filled with baked clay and a very high P.H. This area was treated with sulphur and a sprinkler system was put in to establish the plants it is a low maintenance park.

Bob showed many slides of the progress of the area.

It is named Lake Esmond Botanic Garden of Native Flora. Esmond was the first man to find Gold at Clunes.

L.F.

Field Reports July Meeting:

Greg Binns	At Winters Swamp - six red kneed Dotterals, three Golden Headed Cisticolas, pair of Flame Robins in mid June.
Margaret Tonkin	Coming from Anglesea - Wedge Tailed Eagle eating a road killed Kangaroo.
Lyndsay Fink	Gang Gang cockatoos at Meredith.

WVFNCA Wyperfeld Campout

The wvfnca spring campout is being hosted by the Maryborough FNC. It will be held at Wyperfeld National Park on Aug. 31st to Sep. 2nd. Basic camping facilities are available (no Electricity) and showers have been arranged at Yaapeet. Accommodation is available in Hopetoun and Rainbow.

The programme includes talks by the Park Ranger and Mal McKinty, research officer with the Land Conservation Council on the LCC Mallee Study Area.

There are many day activities available, and detailed programmes are available from the Club Secretary.

Next Committee meeting Aug 12th Greg Binns House no 12 Pleasant St.

September 22nd - 23rd - Angair Wildflower Show.

October 26th - 28th - Halls Gap Campout.

PESTS No 3 Starlings.

The Common Starling (Sturnus vulgaris) is a bird better known than most Native birds. It is an irridescent purplish and greenish black, with a yellow bill and browner wings in new plumage March and April, tips of feathers buff giving it a spotted appearance, Darker in winter.

They are usually in large flocks. Their nesting habits are an untidy heap of grass etc. in buildings and tree hollows, usually accompanied by bird lice, this makes hollows unsuitable for more important birds. In houses they are a fire hazard.

They are widespread and spreading fast. They recently reached Heard Island under their own power. Starlings endear themselves to no one and one wonders why they were brought out here in the first place. An unloved and unwanted bird world wide. L.F.

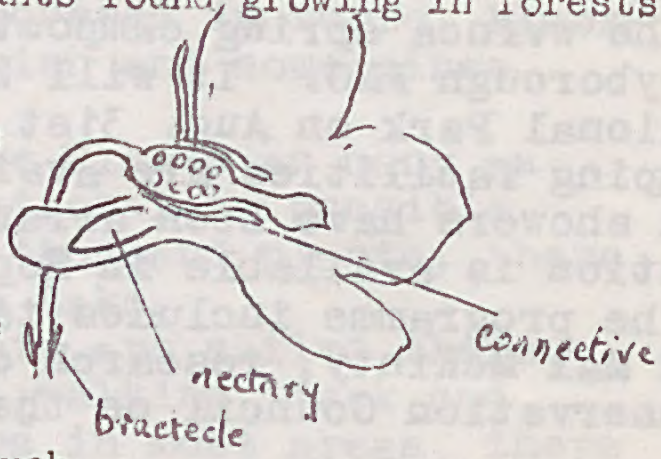
Botanical notes.

FAMILY VIOLACEAE

This family (not surprisingly !) contains the well-known garden plant belonging to the genus Viola.

Violets are usually small plants found growing in forests and other places.

The flower itself is highly zygomorphic. It is composed of: 5 backwardly projecting sepals, the lower one being sometimes pouched at the base; 5 petals, two at the top, one on each side and one at the bottom. The latter has a characteristic nectar-containing spur in the pouch of the lower sepal; there are 5 stamens and three united carpels. The stamens are almost sessile and have the connective (tissue between the anther lobes) prolonged into a thin triangular flap. The connectives together form a pollen-holding chamber surrounding the style. Any movement of the style by a visiting insect seeking nectar disturbs the flaps and results in a shower of pollen falling on the insects head. The stigma is placed in the centre of the opening to the spur containing nectar. Any insect that visits the flower is bound to touch the stigma first and leave pollen gathered from another flower on it, so bringing about cross- pollination.



As well as a few species of Viola around Ballarat there is also Hymenanthera ("membranous anther ") dentata (Tree Violet) which has regular flowers and yellow petals instead of the common violet colour.

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